



**Provider Alert
October 26, 2018**

Hearing Aids Coverage - New Policy

On July 1, 2018 the Maryland Department of Health (MDH) mandated that audiology services coverage for Maryland Medicaid recipients, both adults and children, be managed by Maryland Medicaid Managed Care Organizations (MCOs). Hearing Aids are part of audiology services that are covered by MedStar Family Choice (MFC) under certain circumstances. MFC has implemented a new utilization management policy for Hearing Aid Coverage based on communications with the MDH.

A summary of MFC Policy #1421 - Hearing Aid Coverage is below:

A. Indications for Hearing Aids:

1. Children Under 21 Years of Age:
 - a. Bilateral or unilateral hearing aids will be approved when all of the following criteria are met:
 - i. The participant has a hearing loss of 25 dB HL or greater; and
 - ii. Hearing aid(s) recommended and fitted by an audiologist; and
 - iii. For initial hearing aid(s), written medical clearance is obtained from a physician who has performed a medical examination within the past 6 months.
2. Adults 21 Years of Age and Older:
 - a. Unilateral hearing aids will be approved when all of the following criteria are met:
 - i. The participant has a pure tone average threshold of 40 dB HL or greater at 500, 1,000, 2,000 and 3,000 Hz in the better ear; and
 - ii. Documentation that patient is alert and able to utilize their aid appropriately; and
 - iii. Hearing aid is recommended and fitted by an audiologist; and
 - iv. For initial hearing aid, written medical clearance from a physician who has performed a medical examination within the past 6 months.
 - b. Bilateral hearing aids will be approved when criteria for a unilateral hearing aid is met, and when one of the following additional criteria is met:
 - i. The participant has visual impairment meeting the definition of statutory blindness; or
 - ii. The participant is a previous successful bilateral hearing aid user as a child under 21 years of age and meaningful objective benefit to the participant over unilateral amplification can be documented; or

- iii. The participant demonstrates significant hearing-related disability in educational or vocational settings with a unilateral aid and meaningful objective benefit from bilateral aids can be documented.

B. Information Required for Hearing Aids Review:

1. Audiologist evaluation including audiogram.
2. For initial hearing aid, written medical clearance from a physician who has performed a medical examination within the past six months.

Please contact MedStar Family Choice at 800-905-1722 opt 2 for Prior Authorization of hearing aids.